

The Attraction for Drugs is Spiritual – Osho

Drugs are as old as humanity itself, and they certainly fulfill something of immense value. I am against drugs, but my being against drugs is for the same reason as for thousands of years people have been addicted to the drugs.

It may look very strange. The drugs are capable to give you a hallucinatory experience beyond the mundane world. That is the experience that is being searched through meditation.

Meditation brings you to the real experience, and drug gives you just a hallucination, a dream-like experience but very similar. To meditate is difficult. The drug is cheap. But the attraction for drugs is spiritual.

Man is not satisfied with his mundane existence. He wants to know something more. He wants to be something more. Just the ordinary life seems so flat, so meaningless, that if this is all then suicide seems to be the only way out of it. It gives no ecstasy, no joy. On the contrary, it goes on piling you up with more and more misery, anxiety, disease, old age and, finally, death.

From the cradle to the grave, the ordinary life is just a drag. People go on living it because they are cowards. Otherwise they will commit suicide. They don't have the courage enough to commit suicide. But this is not something one can rejoice in.

You can drag on but you cannot call it living. There is no dance in it, no color in it. It is just a vast desert spreading as far as you can see, with no oasis anywhere. I am reminded of one of the dreams of Leo Tolstoy. It is a rare dream. It is also unique that it went on repeating continuously almost his whole life. As long as he could remember, the dream was happening. And the dream is very strange. In his dream he sees a vast desert and two gumboots without anybody in them, just the two gumboots without any feet inside them, are walking. They go on walking and they go on walking, and there is no end to this walk. The desert is endless. And he always woke up perspiring, his heart beating louder, gripped with great fear.

Without going to any psychoanalyst, he knew the meaning. He himself was a genius. He knew that this is his life, this is not a dream. It is not even symbolic. It is exactly his life. Where he is going? Wherever he goes he will end into the grave. Who is going he does not know. The gumboots are empty.

He is unaware of anybody inside. He is unacquainted of the person who is wearing the gumboots. He is invisible. All that is visible is the gumboots and the desert, and the tedious journey, pointless, meaningless.

This is the reason that drugs have attracted man since the very beginning. And they have at least given him a temporary relief. Only few people tried meditation. And my own understanding is, these people also tried meditation because drugs at a point become useless. You become immune.

In the beginning they give you tremendous experiences, but soon they become almost part of your body chemistry. Then if you don't take them you are in trouble. Your whole chemistry wants them. If you take them, you gain nothing. You go on increasing the doses.

In India where the experiments with drugs must have been the oldest, because the oldest scripture in the world is *Rigveda*, the religious source book of the Hindus, it talks about a certain drug, Somras. Because of this Somras, Aldous Huxley has called the ultimate drug one day, when LSD is refined and there is no side effect, it will be called Soma. The name is from *Rigveda*.

Rigveda according to Hindus is ninety thousand years old, and nobody has been able to prove that they are wrong because their arguments for its old age are almost irrefutable. They are not logical, otherwise it would have been easy. They are astronomical.

In *Rigveda* there is a description of a certain combination of stars that had happened according to modern astronomers also ninety thousand years before. Now there is no way for the people who were writing *Rigveda* to describe it in absolute detail unless they have seen it.

Now this is such an evidence that you cannot do anything about it. The astronomers say for ninety thousand years that combination has not been again in the sky. So certainly whoever was writing it was fully aware of the combination of stars at that time.

For ninety thousand years Hindus have accepted drugs almost as part of their religious ceremonies. It was only under British regime that drugs created trouble, but because they were part of a religious ritual, which is the ancient most religion in the world, even the British government was afraid to interfere with it. It continued. Even in my childhood all drugs were available in the market. There was no question of any illegality. And every school of Hindu religion was using drugs, but they were using it in a very scientific way.

They will give the drug in a certain quantity, create a certain experience in the man, and then when he will come out of it will tell him that, "This was only an illusion. It was simply because of the drug, because of the chemistry, your mind experienced.

"Would you like to experience it in its reality? If the illusion is so beautiful, you can think how much more the reality would be. And the experience created by the drug lasts for a few hours, and again you are back to the same old rotten world. But if the experience is real, it is yours forever. You never lose it. It is not something that has happened to you, it is something that was already in you; you have discovered it."

So I don't see that it was wrong to use drugs in this way. In fact, this should be the approach around the world for the modern man.

And now we have more advanced drugs, synthetically made, and we are capable to purify them more. We can make drugs which have no bad effects at all. We can make drugs which are not addictive. And we can have in every hospital, in every university, a certain department which teaches people how to move from drug to meditation.

Just to talk about meditation remains simply verbal. There is no way through the words to give you any experience. But drugs are immensely useful. The words can explain to you what meditation is, the drug can give you an hallucinatory experience of it. And then you can be initiated into a method. And now you will not be moving in darkness. Now you know that something... if an ordinary drug can do so much, then there must be some way to find an authentic transformation, to experience it without any dependence on anything.

So the drug simply opens up a door and helps you to understand that man's life and his experience need not be confined to the ordinary mundane world – he can fly high towards the stars — that he is capable of knowing things which are not ordinarily available.

Under proper guidance — medical, meditational — drugs can be of immense help. I said I am against drugs because if they become addictive then they will be the most destructive for your journey towards the self. Then you become enchanted into hallucinations. And because it is cheap — no effort has to be done, just you have to go on taking bigger and bigger doses....

In India it came to a point.... Still today there are monasteries where they keep poisonous snakes because the people had become so addicted to all kinds of drugs that no drug has any effect on them. They can take any dose and they will remain normal. The only thing that gives them a little experience is a bite on their tongue by a cobra. That will be death to anybody, but to them it is a beautiful drug experience.

Sometimes it has happened that these people become addicted even to cobra bites. Their whole bloodstream becomes poisonous. And it is on record, and once it happened in front of me, that a cobra was brought to bite. The cobra did it perfectly well on the tongue, and died.

The man had become so poisonous... because the cobra is not poisonous in his whole body. He has simply a small gland which has poison, and that gland is just in his mouth. So whenever the cobra bites someone, he immediately turns upside down, because the gland in his mouth has the opening up. He will bite; that is not dangerous. That is simply making your blood available. And then he will turn over to pour the poison on your blood.

The bite is not really poisonous. The poison comes from the gland which hangs above his tongue in the mouth. It has to hang that way, otherwise the poison cannot remain in it. So he turns upside down. The poison starts flowing out of the gland into the wounds that he has made by his bite. But before he could do that, biting the man was enough to get poisoned himself.

For thousands of years people have been using drugs. Moralists, religious people, governments have been trying prohibition absolutely unsuccessfully. And I don't see that they can ever succeed.

The only way to succeed is what I am suggesting. Rather than prohibiting drugs, let the scientists find out better drugs which give deeper and more psychedelic, more colorful, more ecstatic experiences and without any side effects, and without any addiction. And these should be available in the universities, in the colleges, in the hospitals — wherever some kind of guidance is possible, that the person is not prohibited, is allowed total freedom to use anything that he

wants. And we use his experience to help him grow towards some authentic process so that he can start experiencing something far greater than any drug can give.

And only then he can compare that the first one was just a dream, and this is a reality, and the first one was just cheating myself through chemistry, 'And the first one was not helping me in my spiritual growth. It was in fact preventing the growth, keeping me addicted and retarded'. The second one goes on growing, and now he starts gathering courage to explore more.

He was never aware that these experiences are possible, that these experiences are not just fiction.

So drug can be used in a very beneficial way, to make the person realize that this is hallucination, and the hallucination is so satisfying, would not you like to try the real? We have the real drug also. I call it meditation. And it takes you to the uttermost blissful experience possible.

Then only drugs become useless for you.

If we want humanity to get free of drugs, then meditation is the way. But before we can get free of them, they are very important and can be used to introduce people to meditation.

So this paranoia about drugs is not helpful to humanity. You can make drugs illegal, it makes no change. In fact, they become more attractive, more exciting. Particularly to the youth they become a challenge.

I am amazed sometimes, is man going ever to learn even the ABC of human psychology? The same stupidity goes on which God did with Adam and Eve: prohibition. Don't eat the fruit of this tree. But that becomes an invitation. That becomes a challenge.

And thousands of years have passed, but the authority figures are still in the same mood: don't use the drug, otherwise imprisonment for five years, seven years. And nobody bothers that drugs are being made available in jails. Just you have to pay a little higher price. And the people who come out of the jail are not cured. They go back again because ... the reason is the drug gives them something which your society is not giving.

They are ready to destroy their health, their body, their whole life becomes a mess, but still that drug gives them something which your society does not give. So rather than preventing them, create a society which gives something which is better.

I have been fighting in India with one of the most idiotic prime ministers India had, Morarji Desai. He is absolutely fanatic, is not ready to listen to any reasonable argument. Alcohol has to be prohibited. He prohibited the alcohol. That does not make any change. People start making alcohol but that proves dangerous. Thousands of people died because the alcohol they drank was poisonous, was not made rightly. The people who were making it had no idea what they are making.

And this has been happening around the world. Once in a while some idiot comes in and tries to prohibit, but nobody asks why people drink alcohol.

Your life gives them nothing. You suck them of their blood and in return what they get? No joy, just anxieties upon anxieties. Safe alcohol makes them relax for few hours, sing a song or have a little dance — or a fight in the pub.

But for few hours they are transported from your world. The very attraction proves that your society is wrong, not that alcohol is wrong.

Your society should help people to dance, to sing, to rejoice, to love. The alcohol will disappear. The other drugs are far better than alcohol.

There are many drugs which have less bad after-effects, particularly synthetic drugs taken in a right atmosphere, in a right mood, for example, LSD. It simply enhances your mood, it does not do anything to you. If you are in a despair the LSD experience will become a nightmare. But if you are feeling a well-being, that is the time to take LSD. Then it can give you a really positive ecstatic experience, although it will be hallucinatory.

But if you don't know the real, it looks almost the real. Even a man like Aldous Huxley, one of the most intelligent men of this generation, thought that through LSD he has achieved the same experience as Gautam Buddha, Kabir, Ramakrishna.

If you don't know the real, naturally you cannot call it hallucinatory. It is so real. Huxley had no experience of meditation. He has really no right to say such a thing. You can say such a thing only when you have experienced both, that it is the same experience as Kabir.

Kabir never used any drug. His experience was purely of meditation. On what grounds Huxley can say it is the same experience? He does not know the experience of Kabir. I can understand that he has been through a tremendously beautiful experience, but that experience disappears as the effect of the LSD goes out of the system.

But Kabir's experience remains twenty-four hours, day in, day out, his whole life. Once it happens, it is always there.

This is a simple criterion. But he was so much fascinated by the experience, and he corrupted almost a whole generation. They thought that if a man like Huxley says that LSD can give you samadhi, then what is the need of going into so much trouble for meditation with no guarantee whether you will be able to succeed or not?

I am against drugs because they can become addictive and they can prevent your spiritual growth. You can start thinking that you have achieved what you were seeking, and your hands are empty. You are just dreaming.

But, on the other hand, I am a very scientific mind. On the other hand, I would like drugs to be used, not to be prohibited — but used under proper guidance as a stepping-stone towards meditation.

And governments should pay more attention for improving the drugs rather than preventing people. If improved drugs are available, then other drugs will already be out of the market. There is no need to prohibit anything in the world. Just produce something better — something better, cheaper, legal. Then who is going to bother about marijuana, hashish, heroin — for what? There is no reason. Something better is available with the medical store, without prescription. Even in the hospital you can book a place for yourself that doctors can look after you while you are in the drug experience. Meditators can help you to understand what has happened to you. And this is possible very easily through meditation.

One thing more, that if something even hallucinatory happens to a person, meditation becomes easier. Something in him becomes certain. Something in him is now perfectly guaranteed that meditation is not just fiction.

And the hallucinatory experience also opens some doors.

The guidance can be of very much importance. For example, when somebody is under LSD and is having an ecstatic joy, that is the moment to teach him the method of meditation, because he is very sensitive, very clean and clear as he is not ordinarily. He is dull and cloudy. Now the whole sky is a clarity. You can teach him meditation more easily in this moment than you can teach him when he is in an ordinary state. He seems to listen but he only hears. It does not go deep. His sleep is thick.

But in certain moments under LSD he is very close to awakening. Under a right guide he can be introduced to the technique of meditation. He can be given what is called post-hypnotic suggestions for which he is absolutely vulnerable. He can be told that, “This meditation, you will be able to do it when you are out of LSD experience.” You can go on repeating it that, “You are going to succeed in it.” It is a simple method and there is no problem in not succeeding in it. Just one or two sessions with a guide will be enough. The man can be moved towards meditation. And once he moves towards meditation, drugs have no importance at all.

All the efforts of scientists and the government should be to understand that if a certain thing has been so attractive for the whole history of man, and no government has ever been successful to prohibit it, then there must be certain need that it fulfills. And unless that need is fulfilled in some other way, drugs are going to remain in the world. And they are destructive.

And the more governments are against them, more destructive they are, because nobody can make any refinements on them, nobody can make any experiments on them, nobody is even allowed to say what I am saying.

But I can say it because I am against drugs. But that does not mean they cannot be used. They can be used as a means, they are not the end.

And if we can hope a future free of drugs, if man becomes naturally meditative.... And that is possible. If a child finds his father is meditating, his mother is meditating, everybody is meditating, he will start being curious about it. He also wants to meditate. And that is the age when meditation is very simple because he is not yet corrupted by the society. Yet he is innocent.

And if everybody around him is doing something and enjoying in doing it, he cannot remain behind. He will sit with them with closed eyes. First they may laugh at him, that it is not possible for children. But they do not understand. It is more possible for children than for the so-called grownups.

Just the atmosphere of meditation in schools, in colleges, in universities — wherever the person goes he finds that atmosphere which nourishes his own meditateness.

I would love to see that no drugs are needed in the world. But not through prohibition, but through creating something better, something real. Drugs will be defeated without any difficulty, but these idiotic governments go on giving importance to drugs and they go on destroying the youth around the world.

The most precious time of life is wasted in hallucinations, and by the time they realize what they have done to themselves, perhaps it is too late. They cannot come back to a normal state. Their body has become accustomed to have certain chemicals in it. Then even unwillingly they have to go on injecting themselves with all kinds of poisons.

Or if somebody has not been on hard drugs, returns back, then he finds life very much dull, more dull than you find it because he has seen something beautiful. It always remains a comparison.

He has made love under the impact of drug and he had felt at the very top of the world. And now he makes love and finds that it is nothing but a kind of sneeze. It feels good; you sneeze and it feels good, but it is not something that you live for. Nobody can say that, "I am living here for sneezing."

-Osho

From **The Last Testament, Vol. 4**, Chapter Six